

Brethren Evangelist.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

BY THE

Brethren Publication Board,
ASHLAND, OHIO.

A. D. GNAGEY, : : EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 28, 1896.

MISSION WORK.

We note with pleasure the missionary spirit that is taking hold of the Brethren Church everywhere. It is a sign of a higher spiritual life working out God's plan in believers in Christ. It means increased power and zeal in the church, a realization of the church's tremendous responsibility touching the conversion of souls; it means more of the spirit of Christ for the missionary spirit is preeminently the Spirit of Christ. The church was organized, equipped and commissioned, to bring the world to God through Christ. We have reasons to believe that along with this missionary spirit, will also come the spirit of greater loyalty to, and support of, the established institutions of the church. The one means the other. And now that the awakening has begun, let us keep the coals aglow on God's altar, and let the church take counsel and wisely direct the offerings of these willing hearts, that the greatest good may be done with the means afforded.

THREE SCORE YEARS AND TEN.

The *Christian Advocate* of New York recently celebrated its seventieth anniversary. The first number of the *Advocate* was issued September 9, 1826. During these seventy years, it has had eleven editors, with Barber Badger, a layman, as the first. The present editor, J. M. Buckley, was elected in 1880, and hence has served sixteen years. The literary and mechanical evolution of the *Advocate*, makes quite interesting reading matter to those concerned. Here is an editorial notice taken from the *Advocate*, dated April 11, 1828:

For the information of the delegates to the ensuing General Conference, to be held in Pittsburg, Pa., on the first of May next, we state the following, namely:

There is a stage leaves Philadelphia every day at 4 o'clock A. M. for Pittsburg, and arrives at the latter place in four days. Stage fare, seventeen dollars, exclusive of board and lodging, which will be about four dollars more. They may, therefore, travel from New York to Pittsburg in five

days at an expense of twenty-six dollars. It is thought that the route by the canal is not so convenient at this time of the year.

The circulation of the paper has been vacillating. In 1878, it reached 65,000 but within the next two years it fell off 9,000. The circulation is now some 40,000.

That to which special attention is called, and which furnishes matter for thoughtful reflection is this paragraph, taken from an editorial in the anniversary number:

As a general proposition this statement is true: The circulation of THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE through the seventy years of its history has been an index to the general prosperity of the country and an exponent of that of the denomination, modified by local and transient causes, and by some of permanent but limited effect.

The circulation of the Church paper in any denomination serves as a sort of barometer indicating the progress and prosperity of the church. There is no reason to believe that the experience of the Brethren Church in this particular will be any different with that of other denominations.

A BUSINESS LETTER.

Brother Samuel Lichty of Falls City, has our thanks for the clear, pointed, business letter which he writes for publication. There is a *business* side to religion, and the better this business is managed, the greater will be the spiritual progress of the church. The church that neglects to develop its sense of business, will never be able to organize its forces for good, and accomplish what it might otherwise accomplish. The church should be well organized and conduct its work on strictly *business* principles. Brother Lichty in his letter makes a very valuable suggestion touching the business of the church as it relates to the Publishing House. We give the letter in full:

Brother Editor:—I am very much pained the way you tell about slow unpaid book accounts, due our Publishing House. I don't complain because you speak about it, but I am sorry because what you say is true. It is certainly a grievous wrong, to ask some of our members to make sacrifice, and take up a certain line of the Lord's work, then we act toward them in such a way as to embarrass and humiliate them, and make them financially unable and mentally unfit for the work. Our press should be considered along side of the pulpit, in effectual work for the Master. Withholding from either, what rightly belongs to it, is no less than robbing God. I am of opinion, that in the last great day, more professing Christians will fail to reach the mansions they expected, because they withheld from the Lord what was his own, than from any other cause that can be named. The love of money in this life, will cause heartache and pitiful moaning at the judgment day. But this embarrassing delinquent list at the Publishing House need not be. I venture to say that

churches and official boards, will be held responsible, as well as individuals. A church that is capable of managing its own affairs, should certainly be wise enough to keep any of its members from breaking down our publishing interests, which we are laboring so hard to build up. Every church should see to it, that none of its members owe for the EVANGELIST, or any other church periodical. They should see that their Sunday-school keeps the literature for that work promptly paid. In fact it should be, a law with every church, to see that none within its borders owe the church printer for anything. We should have it plainly understood, that while we can't agree to pay all sorts of debts for our members, yet as a body of Christians, we will frequently take up a collection to pay anything our people may owe the Publishing House. Some churches keep a poor fund in order to pay such things cash as they go, and all should do so. But I think there is urgent need in some places, of a poor fund to pay what is incurred in the past, and long delinquents. Church officials are very unwise when they allow a few careless ones here and there, to break down our Publishing House.

At our quarterly or semi-annual business meetings, one of the first questions should be, "What is due the Publishing House from this body?" Find out the items, then as a church proceed at once to pay it, if those who owe it will not, or can not do so. Let us not sit down contented, and see the Lord God robbed.

Falls City, Neb.

SAMUEL LICHTY.

Every point in this letter is well taken and every reasonable person must admit it's sound business sense. The Editor of the various periodicals of the church is called by the church at large, just as a local congregation calls its pastor. His literary efforts should not be crippled by being subjected to financial embarrassments. If the church owns, controls and manages its own literature, then the Editor should not be made dependent upon the income of the office. The literature is now self-sustaining, that is, the office has sufficient patronage (tracts excepted) to meet all its expenses. But when it so happens that there are many delinquents, involving large expense in making collections, while several hundred do not pay at all, and still others claim the paper at reduced rates on the plea of poverty, is it *right and just and honorable* that one man should bear the burden of these losses? Such would be the case if it were a private enterprise, but the Publishing House belongs to the church. If there is a surplus, the church has the only right to it; if there are losses, whose are they? The church's, of course. *Think on these things*, and if there are delinquents in your congregation, or those unable to pay, would in not be just and honorable, that as Brother Lichty suggests, your congregation, should bear its share of the losses? Does the church mean to place a man at the head of one of its own enterprises and then